

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-14 ISO-00 COA-02 JUSE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 CG-00 AEC-11

DOT-00 FMC-04 AGR-20 ACDA-19 CEQ-02 COME-00 EB-11

EPA-04 NSF-04 SCI-06 FEA-02 CEA-02 CIEP-02 FPC-01

INT-08 OMB-01 SAM-01 STR-08 TRSE-00 AF-10 ARA-16

EA-11 EUR-25 DRC-01 /276 W
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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2891

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION UN NEW YORK

USMISSION GENEVA

USDOCOSOUTH

USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 1892

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR ENRG TU GR

SUBJ: LAW OF THE SEA; TERRITORIAL SEA, STRAITS
ISSUE AND AEGEAN OIL CONFLICT

REF ATHENS 1113, 1273, 1306, STATE 46773

USDOCOSOUTH AND USCINCEUR FOR POLADS

1. SUMMARY. WITHIN PAST FEW WEEKS GOG MILITARY AND
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CIVILIAN OFFICIALS HAVE MADE NUMBER OF STATEMENTS RE

TERRITORIAL SEA, INTERNATIONAL STRAITS, AND AEGEAN OIL CONTROVERSY WHICH ON THEIR FACE APPEAR CONTRADICTORY. CRITICAL QUESTIONS RELATE TO PLANS OF GOG REGARDING EXTENSION TERRITORIAL SEA, ITS POSITION ON NATURE OF PASSAGE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL STRAITS AND ITS INTENTIONS VIS-A-VIS TURKEY ON CONFLICTING AEGEAN OIL EXPLORATION CLAIMS. APPARENT DISPARITY OF VIEWS MAY BE EITHER A) PRODUCT OF UNEQUAL UNDERSTANDING AMONG OFFICIALS OF BOTH FACTUAL BASIS AND WIDE-RANGING IMPLICATION THESE TOPICS--PERHAPS COMPOUNDED BY LACK OF NORMAL BUREAUCRATIC COORDINATION OR B) REFLECTION OF UNIFIED AND COHERENT POLICY WHICH IS PURPOSELY BEING MASKED IN ORDER TO SAGEGUARD GOG INTERESTS VIS-A-VIS TURKEY IN THE EXPLOITATION OF GAS AND OIL DEPOSITS IN THE AEGEAN AND PROTECT GOG BARGAINING POSITION AT LOS CONFERENCE CARACAS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN COURSE MARCH 18 DISCUSSION BETWEEN EMBOFF AND WORKING LEVEL MFA OFFICIAL (OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CONFERENCES) ON RECENTLY CONCLUDED MEDITERRANEAN MARITIME CONFERENCE (ATHENS A-71), LATTER VOLUNTEERED INFORMATION THAT GOG HAS NO INTENTION OF UNILATERALLY EXTENDING TERRITORIAL SEA LIMIT FROM SIX MILES TO TWELVE MILES. GOG WOULD UNDERTAKE SUCH EXTENSION ONLY RPT ONLY IF TURKISH GOVERNMENT FIRST TOOK SUCH ACTION. MFA OFFICIAL STATED THAT SINCE IN ANY EVENT ENTIRE QUESTION TERRITORIAL SEAS WOULD BE DISCUSSED AT LOS CONFERENCE CARACAS THIS SUMMER, HE "FULLY EXPECTS" CONSENSUS FOR ACCEPTANCE NEW TWELVE MILE LIMIT.

3. TO EMBOFF QUESTION WHETHER AEGEAN OIL DISPUTE WAS DISCUSSED DURING MEDITERRANEAN MARITIME CONFERENCE, MFA OFFICIAL STATED FLATLY THAT IT HAD BEEN RAISED NEITHER IN FORMAL SESSION NOR INFORMALLY. HE COMMENTED THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN "IMPROPER" FOR GOG TO RAISE THIS CONTROVERSIAL QUESTION SINCE GREEKS WERE HOSTS FOR CONFERENCE. (NOTE: CHARGE TOLD SAME THING BY DIRECTOR SECOND POLITICAL DIVISION MFA MARCH 22.) UK EMBASSY OFFICER TOLD US MARCH 19 THAT BRITISH ALSO UNDERSTOOD MATTER HAD NOT BEEN DISCUSSED IN THAT VENUE.

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4. IN A SIDE COMMENT STEMMING FROM DISCUSSION AEGEAN OIL PROBLEM, MFA OFFICIAL STATED "YOUR GOVERNMENT AND MINE WILL BE ON OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE STRAITS ISSUE AT THE LOS CONFERENCE IN CARACAS." HE ASSERTED GOG FEELS STRONGLY THAT INNOCENT PASSAGE AND NOT RPT NOT FREE PASSAGE SHOULD BE PRINCIPLE GOVERNING PASSAGE THROUGH THOSE INTERNATIONAL STRAITS WHOSE WATERS MIGHT FALL WITHIN TERRITORIAL SEAS OF COASTAL STATES AS A RESULT OF FUTURE AGREED EXTENSION

TERRITORIAL SEA LIMITS.

5. IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION MARCH 22 ON NUMBER ISSUES
COMMON CONCERN, DIRECTOR GENERAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS JEAN
TZOUNIS TOLD CHARGE THAT TERRITORIAL WATERS QUESTION "STILL
UNDER STUDY AND IT NOT NECESSARILY INTENTION GOG TO EXTEND
CURRENT (I.E. 6 MILE) LIMIT." HE ASSURED CHARGE NO
DECISION HAD YET BEEN TAKEN. HOWEVER, HE OBSERVED THAT
IF LIMIT WERE EXTENDED FROM 6 N.M. TO 12 N.M., IT WOULD
BE ONLY "TEMPORARY MEASURE UNTIL AGREED UPON TERRITORIAL
LIMITS DECIDED IN CARACAS", AND THAT "FREE PASSAGE" WOULD
BE PRMITTED IN SIX TO TWELVE MILE ZONE IN DEFERENCE TO
US AND USSR NAVAL INTERESTS. REGARDING CONTINENTAL SHELF,
HE ARGUED THAT THE 1958 CONVENTION SUPPORTED GREECE'S CLAIMS
TO AEGEAN AND THAT US SHOULD ALSO BECAUSE GREECE AND U.S.
WERE SIGNATORIES WHILE TURKEY WAS NOT. CHARGE MERELY
REPLIED IT WAS A COMPLICATED LEGAL MATTER. ON ISSUE OF
PASSAGE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL STRAITS, TZOUNIS DECLARED
THAT WHILE GREECE STILL FORMULATING ITS OWN POSITION, IT
WELL AWARE OF U.S. POSITION AND THAT IT COULD NOT NOW SEE
"EYE TO EYE" WITH U.S. RE PERMITTING FREE PASSAGE AS OPPOSED
TO INNOCENT PASSAGE THROUGH STRAITS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ATHENS 1892

6. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION MARCH 22, CHIEF HELLENIC NAVY (ARAPAKIS) TOLD EMBASSY NAVATT THAT GOG WOULD SUPPORT US POSITION FOR FREE PASSAGE (VICE INNOCENT PASSAGE) THROUGH STRAITS. RE QUESTION EXTENSION TERROTIRIAL SEAS, ARAPAKIS STATED THAT "CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT NOW ATTEMPTING RESOLVE DIFFERENCES WITH GOT ON AEGEAN SEABED ISSUE AND DEPENDING ON OUTCOME IT MAY BE NECESSARY DECLARE A TWELVE MILE LIMIT PRIOR LOS CONFERENCE CARACAS". (SEE DEFATT 221045Z MAR 74).

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7. GREEK PRESS, INCLUDING ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PRESS, HAS REPLAYED TURKISH NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS PURPORTING TO CONVEY GOT POSITION ON EXPLOITATION OF AEGEAN OIL RESOURCES. FOR EXAMPLE, GREEK-LANGUAGE PRESS CARRIED MAP SHOWING AREA WHICH GOT ALLEGEDLY CLAIMED WAS SUBJECT TO JOINT EXPLOITATION. SIMILARLY AND CONTRADICTORY TO INFORMATION PARAGRAPH 3, GREEK/ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRESS QUOTES CHIEF OF GOT DELEGATION AT MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE ON LOS IN ATHENS, AMBASSADOR NAMIK YIOLGA, AS STATING THAT SUBJECT OF CONTROL OF AEGEAN SEABED WAS DISCUSSED BUT MAINLY AS IT INVOLVED "SUBJECTS OF FISHERIES AND POLLUTION." HIS STATEMENT, AS CARRIED HERE, WENT ON TO SAY "GREECE, WHICH HAS SIGNED THE GENEVA CONVENTION ON CONTROL OF THE SEABED OF THE AEGEAN ISLANDS, SUPPORTS THE VIEW THAT THE AREA IS A LAKE BELONGING EXCLUSIVELY TO IT. FOR THIS REASON, GREECE ALLEGES SHE HAS RIGHTS OVER THE SEABED EXTENDING TO 200 METERS. WE HAVE REJECTED THE GREEK ALLEGATIONS AND INSIST ON OUR VIEW--THAT THE AEGEAN SEA IS A TURKISH-GREEK SEA."

8. PRESS HAS ALSO MENTIONED EXCHANGE OF NOTES BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY BUT WITHOUT DESCRIBING CONTENTS. FONMIN TETENES AT HIS WEEKLY MEETING WITH GREEK PRESS REPRESENTATIVES MARCH 23 REFERRED TO THIS EXCHANGE AND REPORTEDLY REITERATED GOG EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS. HE ADDED THAT INFORMATION ABOUT TROOP MOVEMENTS TOWARD TURKISH

BORDER AND TENSION BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES NOT CORRECT.
HE OBSERVED THAT TURKEY HAS NOT RATIFIED 1958 CONVENTION
AND HAS ITS OWN THEORY DESPITE FACT THAT ICJ INTER-
PRETATION COMES VERY CLOSE TO GREEK VIEW.

9. COMMENT: WHILE IT IS DIFFICULT TO RECONCILE THESE
AND EARLIER STATEMENTS GOG MILITARY AND CIVILIAN OFFICIALS,
FOLLOWING THESES ARE POSSIBLE: 1) NOT ALL GOG OFFICIALS
EQUALLY "AU COURANT" ON ALL DETAILS AND FULL IMPLICATIONS
THESE ISSUES WITHIN CONTEXT BOTH OF CURRENT AEGEAN
OIL CONTROVERSY AND PROSPECTIVE LOS CONFERENCE CARACAS--
AND THIS DISPARITY PERHAPS COMPOUNDED BY LACK OF PROPER
"IN HOUSE" COORDINATION DUE TO PREVAILING UNUSUAL
POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES OR, 2) GOG IN FACT HAS ARRIVED AT
UNIFIED AND COHERENT POLICY ON THESE ISSUES--INCLUDING
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OVERALL LAW OF THE SEA APPROACH--BUT CHOOSES PURPOSELY
NOT TO DISCLOSE IT IN ORDER NOT TO VITIATE ITS BARGAIN-
ING POSITIONS AT CARACAS CONFERENCE OR COMPROMISE ITS
POSITION VIS-A-VIS TURKEY IN MATTER OF AEGEAN GAS/OIL
EXPLOITATION.

10. DEPARTMENT WILL NOTE THAT GOG STATEMENTS OF INTENTION
TO EXTEND TERRITORIAL SEA LIMIT--AS WELL AS CONTR-
DICTORY STATEMENTS ON ITS POSITION ON PASSAGE THROUGH
INTERNATIONAL STRAITS--HAVE ONLY SURFACED IN PAST MONTH
OR SO, I.E. SINCE GOG HAS MADE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS
CONCERNING GAS AND OIL FINDS IN AEGEAN SEA AREA AROUND THASSOS.
IT SEEMS PROBABLE THAT GREEK PURPOSE IS PRINCIPALLY
TO STAKE OUT ITS RIGHTS IN EXPLOITING THESE NATURAL
RESOURCES AND PROMOTE ITS CONCEPT OF THEIR EXCLUSIVITY.
INTELLIGENCE REPORTS OF GREEK CONTINGENCY PLANNING TEND
TO CONFIRM THIS HYPOTHESIS. WHILE GOG OFFICIALS IN
PAST HAVE OFTEN TALKED IN BROAD TERMS OF THE AEGEAN
AS A GREEK SEA, GREECE DID NOT PREVIOUSLY ATTEMPT
(TO OUR KNOWLEDGE) TO PRESS THIS POSITION IN SUCH A
CATEGORICAL AND PERSISTENT FASHION. ABSENT THE OIL
AND GAS DEPOSITS--AND THE "BONANZA" WHICH SOME
OFFICIALS THINK WILL RESULT FOR GREEK COFFERS--THESE
LOS ISSUES WOULD PRESUMABLY NOT ASSUME SUCH IMMEDIATE
IMPORTANCE.

11. GIVEN HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF GREEK/TURKISH
RELATIONS, GOG MAY ALSO BE PLAYING UP THIS WHOLE
COMPLEX OF ISSUES IN EFFORT TO INTRODUCE UNIFYING
FACTOR IN PRES
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